

The Irish Theosophist.

THE FOUNDING OF EMAIN MACHA.

(Continued from p. 191.)

AEDH had no sons, but his daughter Macha, skilful as any warrior in casting the javelin and slinging the round, polished pebbles and the iron balls, sat in the seat of her father. Then Macha claimed his place in the sovereignty of Eiré, but Dithorba and Kimbaoth consulted together and determined that they would have no woman to rule with them. Furthermore, they said that if Macha did not submit to their decision they would devastate the fair fields of Ulla with war. This determination they cut in Ogham on a willow wand and sent swiftly to Macha in the north. A dread anger burned in Macha's heart when she received that message, and like the low thunder of surf on a distant shore, heard through the still night, was the note of her voice as she summoned the Ultonians to her side, and read to them the words inscribed on the slender wand. Then, standing by the high seat, she spoke to the stern-visaged warriors who filled her dún and awaited her words.

“You know, Ultonians, how Aedh Ruaidh reigned long over you, and when those who dwell in the Erne and the hill-palace close by called him away, you chose me after to be the holder of the royal rod. Only a few peaceful months I have been your queen, and now, because I would be coëqual with them and rule as my father ruled, Ulla is threatened by the southern and western kings, who, unless we submit, declare they will make desolation lie on our fruitful fields, our fair plains and hills, and smoke from our burning duns shall rise till the sun and sky are obscured. Ultonians, shall we be subject to these overbearing monarchs? No; from every part of Ulla call in your spearmen and slingers and chariot-fighters; let there be a great host-ing here of all chiefs, each with his-own people, and we will strive

against these kings till either we or they are the victors. Yet I think we shall conquer, for the Mor Reega will embattle herself on our side, and fill us with her own indomitable spirit. Let each prepare for the hosting."

The faces of the heroes grew bright as they listened to the queen, and when she declared the hosting they interchanged cheerful and warlike speech one with another. For as Macha spoke there ran unseen through the dûn a man with angry face, clad in a crimson bratta, and carrying a many-thonged whip in his hand, and the whip was made of twisting, curling fire. Wherever he passed among the Ultonians he caused the battle-ardour to rage and swell and flame with newer vigour, for he was the inciter of war, the swineherd of the great Bove Derg; but at the first sound of Macha's words he quickly journeyed on the magic boar of destruction from his lake-home by the Shannon. Then with great speed the chiefs hastened away to their homes, to call in their fighting men, while Macha returned a message of defiance to Kimbaoth and Dithorba:

"You would not have a woman to rule with you over Eiré; now I swear by the gods I will be high queen over all the isle, and will take your land and break and scatter your power."

The two kings laughed together when they read that war-breathing Ogham, and said:

"'Tis only a woman's wrath. Ulla will yet be ours, for the southern and western nations combined twice outnumber the warriors of Macha. It will be an easy victory."

Three weeks quickly passed, and then at Macha's dûn by Slieve Fuad the Ultonians gathered. Like a myriad suns they appeared as they stood in their chariots, the great wheel-brooches glowing on their breasts, and the long spears, enwrought with findruiney, flashing as they held them aloft. Macha herself, attired in a white many-folded lena and a tunic of dressed ox-skin, with the royal crimson mantle falling loosely from her shoulders and wearing the golden cathbarr on her head, led them. She carried shield and spear and sling, and noble and awe-inspiring she appeared as she stood by the side of her charioteer. The Ultonians' hearts beat with pride and love as they looked at their queen, and three times they shouted her name ere the chariots moved over the bridge of the foss.

Two days the Ultonians journeyed and two evenings they encamped, but on the third day they received word that their enemies were swiftly approaching from the south-west. So they took up their position on a grassy plain by Loch Derg and waited, for Macha said

there would the battle be fought and won. On the morning of the fourth day all preparations were complete, and such was Macha's eagerness to begin the battle that she sent out her slinging men to provoke Kimbath and the Olnemacian king. Then from each camp battalion after battalion issued forth, and ever where the fight raged the fiercest the golden cathbarr of Macha was seen gleaming through the mist and dust arising from the fury of the meeting armies and the trampling of the horses. The queen had not prophesied falsely when she said the Mor Reega would embattle herself on their side, for wherever the Ultonians moved destruction followed them, and finally the ranks of the southern and western kings' warriors were completely broken and overthrown. At the close of day the dead of the kings numbered more than the living, and Kimbath and Dithorba were captives in the hands of the Ultonians.

The next day Macha, sitting in her tent surrounded by her nobles, ordered that the two kings be brought before her. And being generous and magnanimous, and not knowing a vengeful spirit, she forgave the kings, setting them free on condition that they gave her hostages as a pledge of their future conduct, and sent tribute every year. Also she said that from this war she would assume the rulership of Eiré, which she had rightfully won in battle by the help of the gods of the isle.

The humiliation of the kings was in nowise abated by the frank speech of Macha. They could not forget she was a woman, and their conqueror, but they gave the required hostages, and with the remnant of their followers departed to their distant homes. Macha, with the triumphant Ultonians and many spoils, returned to the north, and from her dún she governed wisely the whole of Eiré, caring for the people in every part, and making laws whereby they could fashion their lives.

A few years quietly passed, when from Olnemacta came intimation of the death of Dithorba, who fell battling against the dwellers on the islands of the western sea. He left five sons, warriors of fame, and each demanded a share in the rulership of Eiré, but Macha returned a scornful answer to them, saying:

"I won my sovereignty in the battle, and only by battle will it be torn from me. I retain it, and I deny your right to rule."

The sons of Dithorba were enraged at the answer of the queen, and gathering their people together marched from the west and contended with the Ultonians on the plain of Murthemney, thinking they could compel the half-divine Macha to their will. But the victory was not with the Olnemacian princes, for they suffered utter destruction

and loss of all they possessed, and themselves were taken captive by the Ultonians, and, in charge of some of their captors, sent as prisoners to a dún standing on the wild, rocky coast where Olnemacta and Ulla meet, there to brood and plan futilely and vainly for the recovery of their lands from the Ultonians and the downfall of the great queen of Ulla. Nor did they know that the generous-hearted Macha, who had spared their lives, had knowledge of their plans and broodings, and that in secret ways she sought to turn them from their meditated treachery.

Peace was established over the whole of Eiré when Macha, dwelling in her dún by Slieve Fuad, thought of Kimbaoth lonely in the south, and of the kingly seat by her side unfilled since the death of Aedh Ruaidh. She wished that Kimbaoth should rule with her over Eiré, for indeed ever since her visit to his dún with her father she had thought that the son of Fintann was fairer and nobler than all other men, even the Ultonians. After long thinking she deemed it well to send this message to the king: "The seat of Aedh Ruaidh is empty. Shall we rule over Eiré together?" Joyfully Kimbaoth read these words, for he was not indifferent to Macha; her loveliness and wisdom had kindled a fire in his heart which the passing years and his conquest by Macha had not extinguished, and though he lacked not courage in war, he had never dared to confess his love to her, she seemed so great and far away and only half of earth. But now, giving his kingdom into charge of the tanist, he journeyed with his royal retinue to the north, taking with him Art, the dreamy harper, for Macha had spoken interestedly of Art and his strange dreamings, and he himself wished to be among the Ultonians at the dún of their queen.

So Kimbaoth became king of Ulla, and well and wisely he helped the great queen to rule, and by all the Ultonians they were beloved, Macha especially. Sometimes an Ultonian, perchance returning from some foray, weary and wounded, haply on a dark cold night would stray from the chariot-road over the hills or through the woods, and because of his weakness and wounds despairing, would bid the charioteer hold the horses in check, and say that there must he rest, even though he perish of cold and of pain. Then from the distance would gleam a golden ray, and with renewed courage and hope he would arise and pursue his journey, knowing that Macha was watching over him, and that it was the shining of her magical golden breast-brooch he beheld. And for this watchfulness and care the Ultonians held Macha very dear, giving their lives willingly in service for her.

Occasionally a small rebellion would break out among some far-away tribe, which the Ultonians speedily quelled, making prisoners the seditious leaders. But in the west a greater cloud was rising. The sons of Dithorba, in insidious ways and by the use of the ancient Fomorian magic, were endeavouring to stir the western people into a torrent of fury that should overwhelm the north. Macha had recked of this for long; now she said it must cease. Calling Kimbaoth to her she told him of her determination to travel alone to the forests and mountains of Olnemacta, where the sons of Dithorba had their dwelling, and take them captive with her own hands and bring them into Ulla. Nor did Kimbaoth try to dissuade her from this, for he knew that in whatever great or warlike feat Macha contemplated or performed she would be guided and guarded by the immortal Mor Reega, who was but a name to most of the dwellers in Eiré, though by Macha and a few others, druids chiefly, she was often seen.

The evening drew nigh on which Macha had determined to journey to Olnemacta, and never was evening more beautiful. Behind the trees and the hills the sun slowly disappeared, and soft rainbow-tinted clouds, with flaming spears darting through them, rose as the forerunners of the night, parting here and there to disclose lakes and seas of palest primrose-coloured sky. Macha, watching it from her grianan, compared it to the garden of the gods as she saw the sunset-blossoms burst and fade, and she thought of the gods moving majestic and radiant in their unseen world, sending dreams of a hidden beauty to gladden weary mortal hearts. Then, hearing the sound of her great war-chariot as it rolled to the open door of the dûn, she turned away from the window, for at the sunset-hour she must depart.

LAON.

(To be concluded.)

ROBERT BROWNING.

IV.—HIS MAGIC.

IF it may be at all permitted to critics to classify poets, perhaps the least artificial and arbitrary groups into which we can divide them is to be found in the category—as old as criticism itself—the poets of man and the poets of nature. To most minds, at least, there is a well-defined difference between the dramatist with his passionate portraiture of the life of men, and the dreamer with his passionless glimpsing of the heart of nature. To each of these orders of poetic activity there is a magic which is distinctively its own. To the dramatist it is found, of course, amid the clash and movement of active life, and its theme

is the triumph of the soul against fate ; it stands for the literary representation of the heroic spirit. To the dreamer it is found in the reception within his heart of all those deep and fine impulses of Being, which rise out of a recognition of and an intermingling with the vast and quickening life in star and cloud, in river and tree, in islet and ocean. In English literature we associate Shakespeare with the first of these, and Shelley or Wordsworth with the second. In Browning—of whom it has been well said that he is a literature rather than a poet—I think we find not merely endless examples of both but numerous instances, say, rather, a whole underlying basis of feeling, in which both are welded. To the dreamer, who is pure dreamer and not yet seer, the presence of men in the midst of nature's quick and calm still-life is an irritation and a regret. To the dramatist, who is simply dramatist and not yet wholly a creative poet, external nature can only be an accessory to the groupings of his fancy or the acts of his *dramatis personæ*. But to Browning the action and reâction which relate the world of nature to the world of movement, is revealed with an intense realism which is of the essence of true vision. It is not so much that the external universe represents itself to him as the true setting for human activities, as that he perceives that in the last analysis there is nothing external ; nothing which does not partake of that greatly vague consciousness wherein is enshrined all human hopes and loves, and in which tree and flower and river are melted by the poet's passion into a sense of vast synthetic being, as mists at twilight merge into a deeper, finer play of shadow within the dark embraces of a purple summer-night. Two stanzas from "By the Fireside," that wonderful love-poem, half-lyrical, half-dramatic, with its clinging to elemental nature and its intense comprehension of human passion, will serve to show Browning's power of presentment when dealing with the relations—to us—of this mystic nature-consciousness, which seems partly within the human mind and partly a derivative from without :

"A moment after, and hands unseen
 Were hanging the night around us fast ;
 But we knew that a bar was broken between
 Life and life : we were mixed at last
 In spite of the mortal screen.

"The forests had done it ; there they stood ;
 We caught for a moment the powers at play ;
 They had mingled us so, for once and good,
 Their work was done—we might go or stay,
 They relapsed to their ancient mood."

Or these three stanzas from "Two in the Campagna":

"For me, I touched a thought, I know,
Has tantalized me many times,
(Like turns of thread the spiders throw
Mocking across our path) for rhymes
To catch at and let go.

"Help me to hold it! First it left
The yellowing fennel, run to seed
There, branching from the brickwork's cleft,
Some old tomb's ruin: yonder weed
Took up the floating web.

"Where one small orange cup amassed
Five beetles,—blind and green they grope
Among the honey meal: and last,
Everywhere on the grassy slope,
I traced it. Hold it fast."

In this identification of man and nature there is more than a brilliant fancy; there is some waft of that universal pantheism which is behind all the most magical poetry, and which sees everywhere one consciousness, one life, one spirit; which sees nature and man as the primal emanations of these, and which sees, too, some hint of a deeper power than we can realize or define binding us to God's universe by the glamour of that inward beauty which will reveal itself fully to us only when we are pure enough to realize what is meant by

"Letting nature have her way,
While heaven looks from its towers."

It is indeed in this insistence upon the value and power of beauty as an interpreter of the true meanings of life, that poetry best fulfils its function. To catch from nature some hint of tenderness in the unfolding of the flowers, of courage in the clash of the exultant waves, of reverence and fidelity in the solemn-fronted cliff and unchanging mountain-top; to translate these earth-voices into the vernacular of common life and find in the remotest and most shadowy beauty a fresh impulse towards high living—this is the work of the ideal poet, and here the genius of Browning finds apt and characteristic scope, and his generous trust in life finds free and fresh expression. It is not merely that his joy in nature is not subdued by his perception from afar of the "still, sad music of humanity," but that he modulates this music by a harmony from the world of deeper song, which his spirit has touched in

company with the brooding heart of nature. As the music of nature is chastened for Wordsworth and for Keats by the reminiscence of human pain, so the discords of life are resolved for Browning by the calm tones of spontaneous joy which he hears welling up within nature, calling men to return to a wise and serene simplicity of life. This voice sounds clearer in "Pippa Passes" than in any other poem I know, clearest of all in the imperishable song, "The Year's at the Spring," and perhaps also in the less-quoted :

"Overhead the tree-tops meet,
 Grass and flowers spring 'neath one's feet ;
 There was nought above me and nought below
 My childhood had not learnt to know :
 For, what are the voices of birds
 Ay, and of beasts—but words, our words,
 Only so much more sweet ?
 The knowledge of that with my life began.
 But I had so near made out the sun,
 And counted your stars, the seven and one,
 Like the fingers on my hand :
 Nay, I could all but understand
 Wherefore through heaven the white moon ranges ;
 And just when out of her soft fifty changes
 No unfamiliar face might overlook me—
 Suddenly God took me."

This with its double climax—a climax in the song itself and a climax in the development of the drama—is magic indeed.

It is of the essence of natural magic that it reveals by concealment. Flashing upon us glimpses of its intimacy with nature, showing the quickest pulses of her life, interpreting the vivid lightnings of her laughter and her passion, it is more than indifferent to the search for and analysis of the laws by which the mysteries of nature are laid bare to human thought. It tends rather to hide them, to cast round them a light so dazzling that we cannot pierce it through by any intensity of gaze ; a glamour so clinging that we would not disturb its witchery if we could. That we gain from this love-light cast upon life for us by the skill of the magician far more than we lose who can doubt ; but it remains true, the while, that for a comprehension of nature's secrets, her modes, her laws, not glamour but insight is our need. Yet it is a healthy instinct which induces us to turn from law to life itself, and though glamour may be a weakness to art in its capacity as inter-

preter, it is, nonetheless, a most fertile source of inspiring emotion. This feeling for the magical in life and art is behind all Browning's best work, and it is not surprising to know, therefore, that he found such rapture in music—the most magical, although in another connection the most law-impelled, of the arts, or that he could express its secret charm so perfectly as in these stanzas from *Abt Vogler* :

“All through my keys that gave their sounds to a wish of my soul,
All through my soul that praised as its wish flowed visibly forth,
All through music and me! For think, had I painted the whole,
Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the process so wonder-worth.
Had I written the same, made verse—still, effect proceeds from
cause,

Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the tale is told;
It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws,
Painter and poet are proud, in the artist-list enrolled:
But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
Existent behind all laws: that made them, and, lo, they are!
And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound but a star.
Consider it well: each tone of our scale in itself is nought;
It is everywhere over the world,—loud, soft, and all is said:
Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my thought,
And, there! Ye have heard and seen: consider and bow the
head!”

“Not a fourth sound but a star.” Here is magic at its simplest and purest, where given elements, reàrranged, produce, not a mathematically deducible equivalent, but an altogether greater and fairer result, into which is blent a light, a form, a thought, a vision, borrowed from a world beyond, and in which the mighty largess of nature is aided by a sudden affluence of power from behind, where

“Visibly in his garden walketh God.”

It was his intense joy in music, in art, in the sights and sounds of nature, which gave to Browning—as to every poet—the power of vivid expression without which his teaching would be bare of beauty and his impulse barren of vitality, but we must not forget that even with him natural magic is subordinate ever to the purposes of soul. Although so deeply allied by temperament to the pleasures which abound to the lover of the woodland and the sea, his dominant feeling is always humanistic. He has balanced for us finely the rival appeals of the

world of men and the world of nature in the song which closes the first section of "Ferishtah's Fancies," and has cast in his own lot and the lot of his life's companion with the host of human souls:

"Round us the wild creatures, overhead the trees,
Underfoot the moss tracks—life and love with these!
I to wear a fawn skin, thou to dress in flowers:
All the long lone summer day that greenwood life of ours.

"Rich-pavilioned, rather—still the world without—
Inside, gold-roofed silk-walled silence round about!
Queen it thou on purple—I at watch and ward,
Couched beneath the columns gaze, thy slave, love's guard!

"So, for us no world? Let throngs press thee to me!
Up and down amid men, heart by heart fare we!
Welcome squalid vesture, harsh voice, hateful face!
God is soul, souls I and thou: with souls should souls have
place."

And having made this choice he brought to his chosen life a magic and a glamour and a light such as has rarely been shed upon the heart of man; a light borrowed not alone from star and sun and from that other mystic source of which Wordsworth speaks in his "Lines on a Picture of Peel Castle in a Storm," but a new light of penetrating love and quickening faith, struck by himself from human hearts, which shines upon every study he has given us of the soul in aspiration, satisfaction or defeat, and which corruscates grandly above the brows of all his heroes. It is this that is at last the richest, deepest kind of magic, this that thrills us with his own poignant hopes and makes us realize intensely,

"That he, at least, believed in God, was very sure of soul."

OMAR.

(To be concluded.)

THE WHITE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE.

THE crescent moon shone from behind a fleecy cloudlet. The monotonous chant of the waves rose softly on the evening air, as if singing a lullaby to all sounds that would break the quietude.

On a rock overlooking the sea stood a woman, listening to the low music, which seemed to grow softer, fainter, fainter still, lingering now as a dying echo, and at last like a sigh became lost in the stillness.

"I am come because I am weary and tired," said the woman, answering a voice which seemed near yet far away; and raising her eyes she saw before her a radiant figure crowned with light, and robed in garments of dazzling shimmering whiteness.

"I am the White Spirit of Solitude, whom few mortals have courage to seek," said the figure. "Weary indeed must thou be to enter my realm so far. What has tired thee so?" he asked compassionately.

"Life," said the woman, and after a pause she continued: "Life is but a fleeting phantom borne on the wings of time. Its tempting sweetness fades away like the twilight when descends the night."

The White Spirit smiled and in a voice of great tenderness said:

"Know ye not that from me is born light and peace? Know ye not that ye entered my presence because you brought with you the magic wand Experience, and from its depths I weave this crown of peace." Raising his hand a shining crown appeared.

In silence he placed it on her brow, then softly said: "Bring thoughts that send good-will to thy fellows and from them will shine the jewels in thy crown. The dying echo will waft thee gently to and fro, till thou canst ride in thought the gulf 'twixt shore and shore."

A low hushed sound fell upon the ears of the woman.

"What are men and women to thee now?" said the voice, now growing fainter and fainter.

"Thoughts in memory," said the woman, with a sigh, as she listened to the low chant of the waves.

The woman gazed long and silently at the bright stars, shining so far away in the great dome of space, then with a smile on her lips and a great peace in her heart, she turned and walked towards the flickering lights of the village.

A. P. D.

ABRAM TEGNER: A NARRATIVE.

MANY long years have passed since the day that a single wanderer appeared where now the broad waters of Puget Sound spread between the craggy hills and mountains of that far-off corner of the far west. The days of ancient glory that were hers in a long distant age had left no trace of their existence, and only the memory of the traveller could see that there had ever been a race of people there who once ruled the world of thought and endeavour. But such was the fact, and this man had returned to the ancient seat of his race to again people the spot with the images of the long-forgotten days. His advent was the renewal of settlement and the impulse to a development of the forces that had so long slept unused and unknown. His mission accomplished he departed as unnoticed as his arrival, and the lapse of time has obliterated any records, if such existed, that he had ever been there.

But now that the opening of the new age has prepared some to know of this circumstance, it is to be here recorded who he was, and why he was there. The man was Abram Tegner, an old Dutch trader, who sailed from Rotterdam in the year 1836 to Java, and from thence to the little town of San Diego, where he visited some Indian chiefs, with whom he was connected by a mutual tie of friendship in a certain work that does not depend upon any very close physical relationship.

Having prepared the way for certain things that must at some future day be disclosed, he sailed up the coast and finally entered the Sound where his principal work was to be accomplished. He was of a family that had always been in union with the eastern school of magic, and his boyhood had been spent in the far east, where his father was engaged in a large trade with the islands of the Indian Archipelago, and he had in his pursuit of the same business been informed of the facts of some of his previous incarnations, and of his relationship to the coming change in the destiny of the white race. His soul had blossomed out in a way that made him an instrument for great designs, and he accepted his lot as a pupil should, diligently and obediently, striving to perform the will that called him to the course that he afterwards so steadfastly pursued. His first impulse when being directed was to hasten his steps to the new world and await the time of his final effort; but this he saw was unwise, and so he remained quietly indifferent until he saw that the day was approaching for him to accomplish the final effort of his task.

His journey had for its object the destruction of a last sole monument of the ancient days, which if it had remained standing would have disclosed a fact that it was not wise the world should know until the proper time was ripe. This monument was situated on a large promontory that jutted out from the north side of the southern enclosing headland of the Sound, and is the only point where the inquiry or curiosity of a new settlement has not cared to penetrate.

When he arrived a vast and silent wilderness inclosed the deep purple waters of this wonderful chasm, that stretches its tortuous way so many miles between the hills, and which is an imperishable testimony of the titanic force that rent asunder its rocky walls at the last final effort of the earth to repel the approach of an unwelcome destiny. The days of old contain many buried secrets, but none more terrible than the one reposing where this doom-writ glyph spreads its fateful record before the face of man.

The hours of Tegner's stay were short, but what he saw and did are now to be disclosed. His party landed at the foot of a cliff of almost perpendicular face that rose from the dark waters to the height of some seven hundred feet, and then retreated to a distance of a hundred and fifty feet, rising again from thence to an altitude of a thousand feet more, ending in a level summit of about twenty acres in extent and hollowed a little in the centre, where a wall or vein of quartz seemed to form a ring or boundary.

When Tegner arrived on this spot, having left his companions at the terrace of the cliff, he found standing before him a man of majestic aspect, clad in a white tunic that reached to his knees and was confined at his waist by a belt of purple, and clasped by a broad buckle that had in its centre a single large diamond cut in a triangular form and which blazed with a shimmering opalescent light. His arms were bare nearly to the shoulders, and on his right breast shone a seven-pointed star of gold with a huge sapphire in its centre. Over his shoulders hung a cloak of purple tint, and round his neck a golden chain supported on his breast a large image of a human heart in lapis lazuli, with an enormous ruby in its centre. His legs were bare, but his feet were covered by sandals curiously decorated with eagle's claws inlaid in gold, and forming clasps for the thongs of leather that bound them to his feet. His hair was long and wavy and of a tawny golden hue, and his skin was of a curious bronze or coppery tint that glowed with the fire of perfect health and vigour. His eyes, large, dark, and luminous, shone with kindly feeling, and his face, absent of beard, glowed with the spirit of an indomitable will, and though strong and commanding was

full of a noble tenderness that could not escape the most careless observation.

He advanced a few steps and made a peculiar sign, which Tegner immediately answered, and then the two clasped hands and talked long and earnestly. At last he turned and led Tegner to a small octagon-shaped building of red porphyry that stood in the centre of the basin already referred to, and stooping entered the low door that was in the side approached. The building itself was about twenty feet in diameter and eight feet high, covered with a roof of stone slabs that rose to a point in the centre from each one of the facets of the prism, which the building formed. In the centre of the room, which had no light save that of the open door, was a stone pillar that supported the roof, and in front of it, nearest the light, was an altar of onyx, a perfect cube in form, and on the flat top was inlaid a triangular plate of gold, bearing on its surface a drawing of the zodiac, and around the circle the Sanskrit, Egyptian, Phœnician, and Celtic hieratic alphabets. The stranger directed Tegner to remove the plate and conceal it about his person, which Tegner did, and then led him out of the edifice and to the further confines of the plateau on the side opposite the sea, and pointed to a large white rock that towered above its fellows on the side of a mountain directly south to them. As he did so, a fire suddenly blazed forth on its summit and was answered by others to the south as far as the eye could see, and the stranger, turning to Tegner, gave him a little package and bade him lay it on the altar where the first fire of the new age should be kindled in 1897, as a memento and sign of that day and meeting. He then bade adieu to Tegner, who remained calm and undisturbed, and traversing the slope beneath him was soon lost to view. Tegner retraced his steps, summoned his crew, and demolished the little temple, burying the stones at various spots on the terrace, and then returned to his ship and sailed away.

This temple was the last memorial of the great first American race, and was erected when they were obliged to leave the land to wander in the earth to a land on whose surface they could subsist. Its site is a great centre of force, and will, when the time is ripe, be used as a landmark of advancement towards a more perfect evolution.

There is no further record of Tegner except that he was seen in London early in 1896 in company with an Indian Rajah, and had with him the identical tablet of 1836. He is a man of medium height, apparently about fifty years of age, and has a long beard that falls over his chest in rippling waves of black. His bearing is kindly and his body erect and vigorous.

He will, it would seem, be of service hereafter to some who have in view the preparation for a better age, and he will then reveal his true personality and purpose.

ROLLO.

[NOTE.—The ancient Americans were not, as some suppose, the earliest offshoot of a prior race, but were a primeval race that was the efflorescence of a prior cycle, and their mission was simply to start a new impulse in the few remaining fragments of humanity that remained as a seed for the present world's population. They have disappeared as a race, but their effort is behind all the developments of our modern progress, and their work is not yet accomplished, for the present change of types of men is their handiwork and their mission. They have for long years, through the selected few, been preparing for a great effort to set back the tide of materialism, and to divert into nature the forces that will destroy the mass, but leave the few to go on untrammelled by the bitter strife for gain that characterizes the present degraded condition of all nations and all societies.

The seat of their work has lately been removed to the new world; and when the hour for the change, now rapidly approaching, is come, they will appear through chosen instruments and direct the final endeavour that has, for its object, the rescue of those of our fallen brothers that may remain to look for help when the tidal waves and earthquakes have finished their awful work.—ROLLO.]

SCRAPS FROM A SKETCH-BOOK.

TWO MEN walk together through the common avocations of life. Their details are almost exactly similar; their field of action lies among the easy levels of the commonplace.

Neither of the two strike the casual beholder as being in any way removed from the general mass of humanity which follows such herd-like similarity of thought and deed. Yet between the two a difference exists which is nothing short of that which separates the bulk of mankind from its heroes.

Let us follow them, with open eyes, in their daily walk, and learn something, if we can, of the process by which heroes are made. Such study is sublimely instructive, and it lies within our reach daily, hourly, had we the learning heart.

The first man has all the virtues and most of the failings resulting from that meritorious combination of public school, professional and social life, which makes up the equipment of the modern "gentleman."

Beyond the easy requirements of his well-mastered profession he has not thought a thought an inch deep. His life is smooth, simple, and straight sailing; his ruling passion—nonetheless paramount because he is generally unaware of it—is a desire to stand well with his fellow-men. Nevertheless, even if none but himself existed on this planet, I doubt if he would ever be tempted to infringe the instincts of “good” behaviour, because such men as he have self-love so deeply ingrained that it forms a substitute for principle, scarcely distinguishable even by the most analytical mind.

Virtue, good behaviour, and respect for the proprieties of life have been jammed so tightly into the brains of the present generation, side by side with their Greek and Latin and what smattering of science is necessary for a Government examination, that such things have become as much a part of the respectable man as the laws which regulate his behaviour in a drawing-room. Regular attendance at church has given him enough religion to enable him to find his places readily in the Prayer Book, and even, on the delivery of the morning text, to recall the context without the trouble of looking it up. Beyond this he has no occasion to go, for some of us to-day have not the instinct of devotion so strongly developed as our brothers of the South Sea Islands.

Nevertheless, our man has many qualities to which we feel we ought to be very kind. The life that centres and closes around his little personality is pure and healthy and of good repute. He is as particular about his pleasures as about his linen, and with the same result—that they are spotless and often renewed. Our modern respectable lives a life which he is not ashamed for the most punctilious to look into. His business is well done; his small self-indulgences produce no palpably harmful effect either on mind or body. He lives, if he has an aim at all, for the hours that come when the office-door is closed. Pleasure is to him the great *summum bonum*, and in pleasing himself he does not fail to give pleasure to others, for he is essentially an agreeable, courteous, and well-conditioned soul. By-and-bye, after a few indiscretions, too unimportant even to be remembered in a lady’s drawing-room, he marries; and reaches thereby his very apotheosis of respectability. The cares and joys of family life age him a little—we will not say *mature*, for he has not yet become acquainted with any condition that implies growth—his temper is less sunny than it used to be before babies and bills became unyielding factors in his hitherto easy experience. Nevertheless, he loves his wife and children with the love that is begotten of a keen sense of ownership, and they in return look up to him as the fount of every earthly blessing.

Sometimes it sadly happens that such as he are cut off in their bodily prime, and the world laments, for a moment, what it is pleased to call a valuable loss, and questions the wisdom of Providence in not leaving the blameless to leaven a world of iniquity. But the large majority of our respectable men live on to a respectable old age, when they seem to sink out of life from sheer disinclination to keep themselves going any longer. I suppose, having come to the end of the straight rut in which they have been complacently running all their lives, they have no recourse but to step out of it into——? Ah well! such is much of our national life in the year of the Diamond Jubilee!

Now our second man is equally commonplace, but with a difference. He, too, has passed through the triple combination of experiences before-mentioned, but it has contributed little to his actual formation. In his case there was a strong substratum of individuality ready fashioned and coloured, before education began its stamping and obliterating process, with the result that he enters life with clear and definite ideas upon it. Outwardly our two men do not differ. Each has his avocations, his pleasures, his standing in the world. Both conform to the conventionalities of the existing social order; but only the wise can detect the deep gulf that lies between those brother-souls. For the man we are now drawing is a *true* man—a man alive. Ever since he was old enough to formulate an abstract thought, he has not stopped working at the (to him) most natural question of what he was meant for. He was intelligent enough, at the outset, to see around him many different ways of living the same life. He studied his respectable neighbour, and the result was unsatisfactory from the point of view of incentive and enlightenment. He asked of his church for the meaning of life, and got it in one vague word—heaven.

This drove him further back into the safe region of his own thoughts. If life was the outcome of thought, then by thought alone could life's meaning be revealed. He himself—the eternal He, from whose pressing consciousness there was no escape—what did he represent in a universe whose many parts seemed but to radiate to himself as a common centre? By-and-bye he saw it; faintly at first, then with a clearness which inspired him with purpose. He knew he was at work on a structure whose lines were laid long back by him, the same, the age-long worker; a structure out-rivalling in intricacy and daring grandeur of design the mightiest product of a human brain. That structure was self, and—ah, when he himself was finished, who could say what else had not also resulted from that godlike attainment, the building of a man?

This thought took root and grew, filling his life with the majesty of great possibilities. In his glowing imagination he saw the growth of a race dependent on his growth, his endeavours, his eager grasp at what seemed to him the truth. And who shall say he was wrong?

But fate was not kind to our enthusiast save that she had given him a nature that instinctively balanced true. She took care to show him that his present span of work was merely to chip and shape his stones, and lay them prosaically into a plain and level foundation. Whereupon he checked his high enthusiasm, and forgot the growth of the race, save as a distant, sub-conscious incentive to the patient task of laying brick on brick, with the aid of a line and plummet. So he dropped, as we have seen, into the commonplace groove to which his fate assigned him, and elbowed his respectable neighbour in church, in business, and in society; speaking the language of daily things, but with an accent that was musical with a great beauty of trust. For he knew that fate had better and greater things in store for him who was faithful in the lesser. He knew—for he had felt the pressure of the deeps within him—that he, the humble member of a small English community, was but the temporary cover of something whose greatness was not to be measured or confined by terms of man-made environment. And so he rests satisfied with a quiet place, prosaic, unspiritual, as many of us count spirituality; devoid of the glamour of “good works” and noisy approbation. He regards his profession less as a means of money-getting than as a furtherance of the weal of the community. The social life in which he participates is a reflection—often distorted—of that innate notion of brotherhood which is at the hearts of all men. For this reason he is sociable deliberately, and with a purpose other and higher than self-gratification and worldly expediency. His home is a centre that calls out the heart qualities of all who come within its beneficent radius, for the potent reason that its occupants are regarded not as possessions but as souls, living forces drawn to him by the power of affinity, teachers, lovers and friends.

He conforms to the current religion whenever he finds opposition to be harmful or useless, but his faith is not to be found between the covers of any one book, however hoary. Deep within his heart of heart he *knows* what he seeks, and where; he feels the core of true religion to lie in an inner attitude, a deep aspiration, an unceasing devotion to a greatness within and beyond him. The precise object of this faith, this devotion, he could not tell you in so many words, for he is a plain man, unused to rhapsodical flights, knowing only that there exists, as a very part of himself, a Light whose mirror is the homely

waters of the daily round, in whose reflection all common things grow beautiful.

He is no ardent philanthropist, this quiet liver—plunging about the world to do good, he knows not how or to whom. His one purpose is so to live that the real life in him is developed day by day a little more, trusting to the outflowing of that life to bring about all necessary “good” to himself and all around him.

And so he moves through his appointed sphere, an incarnated peace, because he has seen his life smile upon him in its true meaning of a divine manifestation, and has subordinated all desires to a quiet purpose—the purpose that comes to one who knows himself to contain the seed-life of an unthinkable future. CHARLOTTE E. WOODS.

CONVENTION OF THE T. S. E. (ENGLAND).

THE Third Annual Convention of the T. S. E. (E.) was held at the Hardman Assembly Rooms, Liverpool, on Monday, August 2nd. There was a good attendance of delegates and members, and E. T. Hargrove was present from America, bringing with him the good wishes of the Society there, and also a message expressing Mrs. Tingley's regret at her unavoidable absence. During the Convention a telegram of greeting was received from the Leader.

Dr. Keightley was elected permanent chairman, and under his able hands the business part of the proceedings was soon got through. One very satisfactory announcement made was that the number of Branches and members had trebled itself during the past year, a fact which speaks volumes for the energy and enthusiasm of our English brethren. One of our Swedish brothers carried a greeting from the Christiana Lodge, and D. N. Dunlop and F. J. Dick spoke for “ould Ireland,” while Miss Neresheimer brought greetings from her father, receiving the heartiest of welcomes from the Convention. Various reports were read and various committees formed, and then the whole Convention cheerfully and smilingly submitted to a quarter of an hour's purgatory in a broiling sun while having its photograph taken.

During the afternoon session the election of officers took place, and is as follows: *President*, Dr. A. Keightley; *Vice-President*, S. G. P. Coryn; *Treasurer*, E. Adams; *Librarian*, Miss Kate Lambert. Then followed a discussion of Activities, Literature, etc. As at the other recent Conventions, music was an important feature. In the evening a conversazione was held at the house of H. Milton Savage, secretary of the Everton Centre, which proved a very pleasant ending to the Convention.

A most successful public meeting was held on the preceding Sunday evening, when a large audience listened attentively, and by their applause showed that the spirit and purpose of Theosophy are beginning to be recognized as acceptable and worthy of support. Dr. Keightley, Dr. Coryn, S. Coryn, E. T. Hargrove, and D. N. Dunlop were the speakers, and the speeches, especially the last two, were heartily applauded.

All through the Convention was animated by a feeling of good fellowship, which shows that the spirit is growing equally with the body; and one felt that the links between Branches and members were being welded more firmly and closely together. It is good to see old friends, good to make new ones, and for this, if nothing more, one would hail an occasional Convention as a very good thing indeed.

NOTICE.

MRS. CLEATHER, appointed by Mrs. Tingley as Home Crusader for Europe, desires to commence work in September. Branches and Centres anywhere who wish to avail themselves of her services, either publicly or at their own meetings, are requested to communicate with me at once, so that a programme may be immediately arranged.

The expenses of the Home Crusade are considerable, including cheap and free literature for distribution at the meetings. Donations, small and large, will be gladly received, and will in some part be devoted during the winter to providing brotherhood suppers in various places, at which Mrs. Cleather will speak.

HERBERT CORYN,

62, Queen Anne Street,

Cavendish Square, London, W.

Director of Home Crusade.

THE T. S. IN EUROPE (IRELAND).

13, EUSTACE STREET, DUBLIN.

THE Dublin Lodge has been very quiet for the past month, owing to many of the members being away in different parts of the country, but soon it will be in full activity again, as the session begins shortly. It has had the benefit of visits from three active members of English Branches—the Vice-President of the Cardiff Lodge, the President of the Portsmouth Lodge, and the Treasurer of the Romford Lodge. It grieveth us exceedingly that, with these among us, the time for our public lectures was not.

ROBT. E. COATES, *Hon. Sec.*